

## Commission of the European Communities DG V Quarterly Newsletter on Employment Policies

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### CENTREFOLD

Across Community borders

**Directorate-General  
Employment, Industrial Relations  
and Social Affairs**

# DEVELOPMENTS OF A GLANCE

<b>Belgium</b>	<p>Integration training projects are part of a concerted effort to increase capacities and skills of LTUs in Flanders. (p. 13 )</p> <p>Loss of earnings due to exchange rate fluctuations are compensated for Belgians working in France. (p. 16 )</p> <p>In the case of a total or partial career break, the employee must be replaced otherwise the unemployed faces sanctions. (p. 19 )</p> <p>Local employment agencies may now offer seasonal work in the agricultural and horticultural sectors to unemployed persons. (p. 19 )</p>
<b>Belgium / Netherlands</b>	<p>EUROLOKET has been proposed for more intensive cross-border cooperation in the fields of placement and schooling. (p. 21 )</p>
<b>Denmark</b>	<p>Regulations on benefits in connection with part-time work and temporary lay-offs have been changed. (p. 9 )</p> <p>Training allowance is now granted to young unemployed persons after only six months of unemployment. (p. 10 )</p> <p>A new Order provides that construction workers should have access to certain facilities. (p. 23 )</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>The two special programmes for LTUs of the Federal Government have been well-received. (p. 16 )</p> <p>The first employment office in the new federal states has been connected to the system of computer-aided job placement. (p. 20 )</p>
<b>Spain</b>	<p>During the first quarter of 1991 there was a simultaneous drop in labour force, employment and unemployed. (p. 1 )</p> <p>In future the social partners will participate directly in implementing <i>Plan FIP</i>. (p. 11 )</p> <p><i>Plan FIP</i>, enabling an annual average of 300,000 persons to receive training, has been evaluated. (p. 11 )</p>
<b>France</b>	<p>Employment measures have been adopted by the Government centred around the fields of job creation, training and job maintenance. (p. 1 )</p> <p>The ANPE has produced a blueprint for information systems for the provision of better user-services. (p. 3 )</p>
<b>France/European Community</b>	<p>In November 1991 the European symposium "Action against long-term unemployment" will be held in Paris. (p. 22 )</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>A new programme aims to increase female participation at all levels of the labour market. (p. 17 )</p> <p>Plans for an area-based response to long-term employment have been approved on a pilot basis. (p. 17 )</p>
<b>Italy</b>	<p>Modifications have been made to the practice of recruiting unemployed jobseekers for jobs in the public administration. (p. 20 )</p>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<p>Labour market trends over the last decade are highlighted. (p. 5 )</p> <p>Labour policy in 1990 involved revisions in a number of fields, e.g. early retirement and temporary work. (p. 6 )</p>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<p>There are significant discrepancies between employment supply and demand in large cities. (p. 8 )</p> <p>The employment service wants to improve quality by an attuned provision of services for each client. (p. 8 )</p> <p>The Cabinet wants two regions to receive more freedom from regulations in the fight against long-term unemployment. (p. 12 )</p> <p>The system of labour pools is the object of an experiment in three large cities and is also undergoing modifications. (p. 12 )</p> <p>Guaranteed jobs or training will be offered to unemployed school-leavers under the Youth Employment Guarantee Act. (p. 18 )</p> <p>The Labour Minister wants a better application of the criteria for suitable work to combat long-term unemployment. (p. 21 )</p> <p>Priorities of the Dutch presidency of the EC will include employees' involvement in company decisions and working conditions. (p. 22 )</p> <p>Research has revealed that employers find quality of staff more important than wage-cost subsidies. (p. 23 )</p>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<p>A new work experience programme, Employment Action is the main ingredient of a package of measures to assist unemployed persons. (p. 13 )</p> <p>The radio campaign "Action Special" provides advice and information on labour market affairs. (p. 23 )</p>

# OVERALL DEVELOPMENTS

## Spain

### Latest labour market developments

The most recent labour market data from the Labour Force Survey (*EPA*) for the first quarter of 1991 seem to reflect the impact of the measures which have been adopted to temper the Spanish economy and to reduce the effects of the crisis that other western countries are undergoing.

One of the *EPA*'s most significant findings is the simultaneous drop in labour force, employment and to a lesser degree also in the number of unemployed. In this way, the labour force decreased by 44,000 persons in the first quarter of 1991, as opposed to the same quarter of 1990 when the figure rose by 62,500 persons. This appears to reveal a "dejection" effect (*efecto "desanimo"*) due to the less favourable labour market prospects, since the drop in the labour

force was concentrated among the group of young persons aged between 16 and 24 years.

As regards employment, the most relevant data indicate a fall of 40,200 in the number of persons in gainful employment in the first quarter whereas the same group in the same period of 1990 increased by 73,700 persons. Although this decrease in employment has affected permanent employment as well as temporary employment, it is noteworthy that the latter fell for the first time since 1987 by 13,700 temporary contracts. On the other hand, at a sectoral level, the *EPA* results show that this drop in employment only occurs in the industrial sector, whereas in construction and the service sectors employment has risen.

Finally, unemployment has fallen by 3,800 persons so that the unemployment rate at the end of the first quarter of 1991 amounted to 16.1%.

**Table 1- Spanish labour market development in 1st quarter 1991**

	Total in 1000s	1.1.91 - 31.3.91		1.4.90 - 31.3.91	
		in 1000s	%	in 1000s	%
Labour force	15,000.1	- 44.0	- 0.3	7.7	0.1
Employed	12,579.6	- 40.2	- 0.3	97.7	0.8
Unemployed	2,420.5	- 3.8	- 0.2	- 90.0	- 3.6

## France

### Employment measures

New employment measures were adopted by the Council of Ministers on 3.7.91. The Government has adopted a policy aimed at lasting employment. So far, the policy has been expressed in 15 measures, centred around three major aims:

- allow new jobs to emerge in SMEs and SMIs and in the home-care services;
- improve the quality and effectiveness of training actions so that they coincide with the needs of the economy;
- maintain the jobs of those employed by companies which are undergoing problems related to the economic climate, and to foster the vocational reintegration of jobseekers threatened with exclusion.

#### 1. New jobs in SMEs and SMIs and home-care services depend on the following decisions:

The launch of a plan of action designed to meet demand for a skilled labour force:

A number of companies report difficulties in recruiting the skilled labour force which they need. It is the responsibility of *Préfets* to propose a plan of action whereby networks and qualifications are pin pointed which are strained at the level of each employment catchment area. On the basis of this analysis, the actions to be undertaken will be defined in terms of the development of the contents of training courses and training offers.

The Government will call on the National Employment Agency (*ANPE*) to accentuate its support to SMEs and SMIs:

The *ANPE* will have to devote an additional

## OVERALL DEVELOPMENTS

10,000 working days before the end of 1991 to assisting 40,000 companies.

Furthermore, help to SMEs which was formerly required for the definition of staffing and skills needs will be reduced. Instead, the costs of external agencies will be covered.

Renewed exemption from social contributions when taking on the first employee:

Since its creation in 1988, it has enabled the creation of more than 60,000 additional, lasting jobs by exempting employers from the payment of social contributions for two years

Major simplification of employers' social declarations:

The complexity of formalities involved in wage declarations to the various social bodies, eg. Union for the collection of social security and family allowance contributions (*Union pour le Recouvrement des Cotisations de Sécurité sociale et d'Allocations familiales - URSSAF*), *ASSEDICs* (Regional industrial insurance boards) and Complementary Retirement Funds, constitutes a major obstacle to employment for employers whose administrative capacities are limited, i.e. private individuals and small companies. Procedures for wage declarations and the payment of social contributions have been radically simplified. Employers will restrict themselves to a quarterly declaration of the hourly wage bill and the number of hours worked. The *URSSAF* will itself calculate the amount of contributions due. This system will be fully operational throughout the Republic in 1992. For small companies (less than 10 employees), a simplified declaration and payment service will be defined in collaboration with the social partners.

The Government is embarking on the development of jobs in the home-care services:

There is an enormous job potential in the family sector (child-minders, home-helps for the elderly and the handicapped, household helps). This sector is underdeveloped at present, however it is likely to create a high number of jobs and at the same time lead to an improved quality of family life. To further progress, the Ministry of Labour will propose the technical modalities in the autumn which will allow a significant increase in employment in this sector. These proposals can be implemented in early 1992.

### 2. Improved quality and efficiency of training actions

Initial clarification and improvement of conditions for receiving young persons:

Young persons must be able to present themselves in a place of reception and orientation, and benefit everywhere from the same information for guidance towards the best possible choice. As an experiment in the 13 priority departments for local policy, agencies are installed for young persons in each neighbourhood where they are not as yet located. These combine the entire range of

competent services.

Adoption of the principle of systematic assessments of individual ability (*bilans de compétence individuel systématiques*):

The first necessary step for a young or adult jobseeker who is wondering about his/her professional future is to be able to make an individual assessment of abilities, i.e. an assessment of level of training, personal or professional experiences, motivations and capacities. In 1992, 400,000 assessments will be proposed to young and adult jobseekers before the long route towards integration or qualification is mapped out.

The "training credit" (*CFI*) is consolidated (cf. iM 34):

Every year, 120,000 young persons leave the education system without any qualifications. Even if this number is falling in relation to past years, it is necessary to offer a second chance to those who have not acquired any certificates. *CFI*, which was launched in 1989 has been very successful amongst young persons, almost 220,000 have benefited from the measure since 1989. The Government's aim, apart from stabilising the *CFI* intake at 117,000, is to improve the quality of the measure whilst implementing the following actions:

- more distinct diversification of the training routes according to the young persons' characteristics;
- to aim more clearly at employment;
- to construct more routes for alternated training allowing close consultation between training centres and companies;
- to develop a real accompaniment and counselling function.

Development of training leading to qualifications in industrial professions:

At the moment, several industrial sectors and building and civil engineering sectors are experiencing labour shortages, notably of skilled workers and technicians. The present average rate of financing for training periods by the State, set at FF 24/hour does not make it possible to set up training courses leading to qualifications in these sectors. To resolve this difficulty, the cost of one hour of training period will be raised to FF 75 for some of the training actions.

### 3. Reinforced vocational integration actions for young persons and LTUs.

To face the risks of vocational and social exclusion which some jobseekers encounter:

The Government underlines its commitment to LTUs and those in receipt of the Minimum Integration Income (*RMI*). Therefore, in 1992 more than 690,000 actions will be on offer to these groups including 400,000 specific labour contracts.

Development of integration structures by economic development is encouraged:

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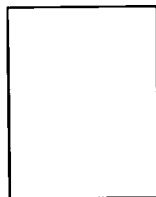
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Institute for Policy Research  
P.O.Box 985  
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800 "intermediary associations" (*associations intermédiaires; a sort of labour pool*) employ approximately 30,000 persons every month for an average of 48 hours. Furthermore in 1990, 200 "integration companies" (*entreprises d'insertion*) took on 6,500 persons on the basis of a labour contract assisted by the State. Now it is a question of allowing integration by economies of scale to become one of the privileged means of access to employment for those in difficulties and also one of the tools of local policy. Intermediary associations will benefit from an exemption from social contributions with a limit of 750 hours per salaried worker per year. At the moment, integration companies benefit from assistance from the Ministry of Labour of FF 36,000 per job per year. The number of subsidised jobs will rise to 4,000 in 1992.

Creation of an orientation contract (*contrat d'orientation*) for young persons between 16 and 18 years:

Young persons who leave the school system without any qualifications often need an initial, brief work experience. With a view to coherence between the various possibilities on offer to young persons, the Employment-Solidarity Contract (*CES*, cf. iM 32) will be abolished for 16- to 18-year-olds and will be replaced by an orientation contract which is better suited to their needs. The orientation contract consists of a full-time employment contract for a period of 3 to 6 months, comprising:

- payment equivalent to 25% of the hourly guaranteed minimum (*SMIC*) salary, half of which is paid by the State;

- an orientation training course of 32 hours per month;
- a diagnostic and forward-looking assessment of experiences, motivations and capacities of every young person.

The employers who can sign orientation contracts will be the same as those in the case of *CESs* (local collective ownerships, public bodies and corporations, etc.).

The counselling function is widely developed: Young persons and adult jobseekers who follow a vocational route must be able to benefit from the support of a counsellor (*tuteur*) whose role it is to train and supervise them, to advise them and to accompany them in their training.

### Cyclical policy

Measures have been adopted to help companies undergoing temporary difficulties.

Temporary increase of public funding for short-time work:

This measure in fact avoids redundancies in those companies which are undergoing a temporary reduction of activity. The amount of public assistance is brought to FF 18/hour which the State will pay towards the specific benefit (*allocation spécifique*) until 31.12.91.

The range of measures adopted by the Council of Ministers on 3.7.91 will rapidly be implemented. For a number of these measures this will require the filing of a bill which will be submitted to the Parliament before the end of 1991.

## France

### Blueprint for ANPE information systems

The blueprint for the information systems of the National Employment Agency (*ANPE*) aims to establish a flexible tool for the provision of better user-services. From now on, data processing will play an increasingly important role. Its function is to establish the objectives and the means for accomplishing new steps. The central aim is to create work stations in local agencies in answer to the organisation's ambitions for progress.

#### Data processing in full growth

Operational data processing only began to develop to any major extent in 1984. At the moment two major centralised applications are in existence, these are *SAGE* for the management of job offers, and *GIDE 1 bis* (Enhanced file for the computerised management of the demand for jobs; for both systems cf. BIR France Ch.II.5.4) for the management of demand for jobs. It will be

mid-1992 before all agencies are included in these system networks. Data processing at the *ANPE* is therefore in a state of full growth with all of the inherent "growing pains".

The public authorities and the social partners hoped for a joint data bank for jobseekers, shared by the *ANPE* and the *ASSEDICs* (Regional industrial insurance boards; BIR France, Ch.I.1.1.), the former is responsible for the update and the latter for the payment of benefits. The first consequence is that this data bank is managed on the *ASSEDICs'* computers at 13 different locations; each *ASSEDIC* data processing group is responsible for the maintenance and development of the joint application, *GIDE 1 bis*.

#### A complex network

Each local agency is therefore linked to two central computers, one at the *ASSEDIC* for the job demand and the other at the *ANPE* for job supply. Further, *ANPE's* two computers serve as



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a relay between the local agencies and the *ASSEDICs*. So the network is very complex and therefore fragile.

The range of factors such as the newness and complexity of the system, and badly stabilised applications lead to fairly frequent breakdowns in the system which only serve to disrupt the basic work with the users. The blueprint will therefore have to concentrate above all on improved reliability to guarantee efficiency.

Applications in the fields of management, personnel and budget make service satisfactory but user-friendliness can be improved.

Moreover, management systems and systems for the monitoring of activity are conceived entirely independently, not adding to the ease of operations. So general control of the organisation proves complicated.

### **An adequate and efficient work station**

The aim is to create a work station which is flexible, reliable and user-friendly to serve the users more efficiently. When the *ANPE* signed the progress agreement with the State in 1990 (cf. *im* 32, 33 and 34), it undertook to improve the service offered to users, in terms of speed, quality and personalisation. This aim is reflected within the organisation by the willingness to offer an immediate service through processing the user's application entirely whenever possible.

This implies a data processing system which can react quickly in all the fields in which the *ANPE* is active (employment, but also training and various benefits), and with the greatest possible ease for the user. Data processing should leave more time for the *ANPE* officer to devote to establishing contact with the jobseeker or company, without being snowed under with technical problems, connections, disconnections, coding tables, coding languages, etc. The same objective exists for the management and the monitoring even if it may appear to be less.

### **Towards an operational system in 1994**

For the system to be operational, four series of actions must be implemented:

#### **1. In the field of data processing:**

- Initial process of strengthening and making the entire system more reliable. Increasing collaboration with *ASSEDICs* to improve the joint job demand application has been undertaken since the beginning of 1991. To guarantee more reliable running, a manager entrusted with data processing quality has just been appointed. His role is to coordinate the action of the processing centres and to lead the teams of technicians with an objective of "zero breakdown". At the same time, the development teams work to enhance and to modernise their methods: to be involved in the running from the outset, to move forward in

close liaison with the future users and to rationalise the authentication procedures of the new applications.

- Conceive an adjustable technical solution: the integration level ("*couche d'intégration*") The *ANPE* agent has access to various applications at different locations. The trend will only increase in the years to come as regards connecting users to training offers by means of information films. The basic idea is to install software in every local agency which is capable of managing this whole complex environment instead of the agent. This device is called the "integration device" ("*couché d'intégration*") It will automatically guarantee connections and disconnections over the range of applications used. It will provide the user with a uniform image of all the screens used for consultation or "capture"; it will manage the codification tables; it will allow the temporary storage of data to process them in a particular way. Help to the operator will therefore be systematic so that he can concentrate on his real profession, i.e. the provision of advice and support for the working population and companies. Furthermore, this system is adjustable: it constitutes the first step towards more decentralised data processing. In each local agency, it requires the deployment of effective material which can carry out the required processing. One of the key problems to be resolved is the administration of such a network, the implementation, maintenance and uniform installation of the successive versions of application packages.

- New applications must be developed at the same time: To achieve the level of performance required by the progress agreement, applications must be created or perfected:
  - *SAGE 2* for job offers and the companies;
  - training;
  - improvement of job demand data (*Amélioration des données sur la demande d'emploi-AEDE*) to distil labour market statistics;
  - the new operational repertory of professions and jobs;
  - management of benefits (sessions of guidance, evaluation, jobsearch);
  - management of employment measures.

#### **2. In the field of organisation:**

The actions which are to be undertaken concern primarily the organisation of the data processing service in the aim of ensuring better appreciation of the users' needs. The improvement of the organisation of local agencies which ensues from the commitments made in the progress agreement, will be made possible by the envisaged data processing device.

#### **3. In the field of human resources:**

The *ANPE* does not have the necessary know-how or staff numbers at its disposal to success-



fully complete such an ambitious programme within four years. The employment market for data processing is such that public authorities are incapable of offering the levels of salary which would enable a high number of persons to be taken on. The chosen solution is therefore to call in a partner. The experienced company with which the contract of partnership will be concluded will commit itself to the same objectives as the *ANPE*. Furthermore, it will ensure a transfer of competence to the company computer scientists.

The other important aspect of the human resources plan is the training of the users of the data processing; basic knowledge and practical perfecting of the different applications, training in each agency of two persons capable of ensuring the first-level maintenance of the system.

#### 4. In the field of financing:

The main cost is the renewal of equipment in the local agencies: more efficient machines must be installed. The public authorities have agreed to

cover the extra costs. In effect, the expected time gained should allow a better service for the users.

#### Strategic goal for the ANPE

Implementation of the progress agreement means a change of outlook on how services are rendered, and to do that, data processing must be viewed and used just as automatically as any other tool. This is a major challenge that the blueprint aims to deal with head on.

The mutual commitment of the State and the *ANPE* will only be crowned by success if effective, flexible, reliable and user-friendly data processing is installed to support the efforts of all concerned. The blueprint must make data processing at the *ANPE* an efficient tool in the service of employment professionals. This ambition sounds relatively modest, however the scale of the aim is enormous if one looks at the size of the task to be accomplished.

## Luxembourg

### Labour market developments of last decade

In its report on the economy, the Luxembourg statistics office (*STATEC*), characterises the European economic year of 1990 in the following way:

- reduced activity caused by drop in exports due to slack in world trade and decreased investments;
- accentuated inflation;
- relatively sharp increase in rates of wage rises;
- restrictive monetary policy to combat inflation leading to a rise in interest rates.

Due to its open nature, the Luxembourg economy is especially susceptible to foreign impulses which punctuate the evolution of national economic activity. Therefore, compared to exceptional performances in 1989 (rate of growth: 7.2%), *STATEC* registered a deceleration of economic activity in 1990, the rate of growth being 3.4%. For 1991, the experts count on a slight improvement and the rate should verge on 3.6%.

#### Paid employment

As far as employment is concerned, the positive tendency is again confirmed. Paid employment has increased considerably. The increase was approximately 25% between 1984 and 1990, 20% for men and 33% for women. As in previous years, this development is notably the outcome of increased activity in the business community (excluding steel and building industries and services), the spread of part-time employment and

contribution of women.

#### Foreign and cross-border workers

Employment growth is for a large part determined by an increased influx of cross-border workers: between 1984 and 1990 their numbers rose by 130%. At the end of October 1990, the rate of participation of cross-border workers in the paid work force was 20.3%. Together, foreign and cross-border workers represented more than 46% of the labour force in March 1990 (compared to 41.5% in 1988). The vast majority are EC citizens.

Studies of figures of the new arrivals on the national labour market of permanent residents and cross-border workers for the years 1985 - 1989, confirm the decreasing role of nationals in employment. In 1985, 28.3% of new arrivals on the labour market were Luxembourg citizens; in 1989, they only represented 9.1%.

#### Unemployed jobseekers

Unfilled job demands have risen from 57 in 1974 to 2,060 in 1990. The unemployment rate was 0.2% in 1975 and 1.3% in 1990. The highest unemployment rates were registered in the period 1983 - 1987 (1.5% - 1.8%). In recent years, 40% of unemployed jobseekers were women and 60% were men.

Detailed analysis of registered unemployed throws light on five important aspects:

- foreign workers do not face a higher risk of becoming unemployed jobseekers;
- compared to men, there is a less distinct decrease of women in the ranks of the unemployed;

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- all age groups are affected by the positive developments on the employment market, the most marked improvement observed is among the group of jobseekers under 25 years;
- maintenance of a high number of unemployed jobseekers with a low level of education (unemployed persons who have only completed the first phase of schooling);
- tendency to extend the periods of registration

Since 1988, the number unemployed persons in

receipt of benefits has dropped parallel with the number of unfilled job vacancies, with the significant influence of traditional seasonal variations. The parallel drop in the numbers of persons in receipt of benefits and registered jobseekers in 1989 continued its course in 1990.

The number of job vacancies which were not filled in the period 1988 - 1990 represented only a small number, i.e. 200 on average for each of the three years concerned.

**Table 2: The employment situation from 1975 - 1990**

	1975	1978	1981	1983	1985	1987	1988	1989	1990
Unemployment rate total	0.2	0.7	1.0	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.3
of which - men %	65	57	53	54	50	57	61	62	59
- women %	35	43	47	46	50	43	40	38	41
- full-time unemployed in receipt of benefits %	14	43	56	55	52	45	42	42	43
Unfilled job vacancies (average over 12 months)				170	198	245	216	210	178
Paid employment (increase 1) %					2.3	3.3	3.8	4.8	4.9
Cross-border workers (increase 1) %					9.7	15.6	16.2	18.1	17.6
Employed labour force by nationality: in %									
- Luxembourg nationals							59	56	54
- other EC workers							39	41	44
- other workers from outside EC							2.2	2.3	2.6
Nationality of new arrivals (1985 - 1989): in %									
- Luxembourg nationals					28	16	12	9	
- other EC					68	80	82	84	
- non-EC					4	4	6	7	

1 compared to last year.

## Luxembourg

### Labour policy in 1990

#### Early retirement

By virtue of the law of 24.12.90 a widespread improved system of early retirement was definitively anchored in Luxembourg's labour law. This law removes the temporary character from the early retirement and establishes early retirement on a permanent legal basis. As an element of the policy to improve and humanise working conditions, it continues early retirement reserved for workers who have completed 20 years of shift or night work (cf. iM 28 and iM 20).

Further, this law signifies the integration of "adjustment" early retirement into labour law which will apply to wage-earners whose jobs are threatened by cut-back in the workforce due not only to company restructuring but also due to the redefinition of jobs as a result of technological advances. The application of this adjustment is a significant new factor in this law.

Furthermore, the law of 24.12.90 renews and improves the "solidarity" early retirement as an active policy instrument of solidarity between the generations. This enables companies to in-

troduce a more even distribution of ages throughout companies, to recruit younger people and ease the process of internal promotions. The attraction of this important aspect of labour market regulations was enhanced by a rise of the rate of intervention of the Employment Fund from 50% to 70%.

The law of 24.12.90 also brings other significant improvements to the early retirement system, notably as regards the calculation of the early retirement benefit. The Minister of Labour has henceforth the possibility of extending the reference period to 18 months which serves to determine the basic payment.

#### Legislation for dangerous companies

The reform of legislation in the field of dangerous companies was established by the law of 9.5.90. Three Grand Ducal rulings were adopted on 18.5.90 to safeguard one's surroundings through occupational safety standards and environmental protection. These comprise:

- drawing up a list and classification of companies which are dangerous, insalubrious or lacking basic facilities;
- fixing authorisation levies for companies which

are dangerous, insalubrious or lacking basic facilities; and

- appointment of experts and officers responsible for investigating and confirming breaches of the legal regulatory measures in the classified companies.

### Handicapped workers

The bill which was submitted to the Lower House on 9.5.89 proposes to reform and coordinate legislation concerning vocational rehabilitation, integration and reintegration of handicapped workers.

In concrete terms the reform proposes the following modifications:

- integration of the present Office for Placement and Vocational Re-education of Handicapped Workers (cf. BIR Luxembourg vi.3) as a service within the employment administration;
- enlargement of the legal field of application to include persons having mental or sensory handicap;
- establishing the measures necessary in view of the vocational integration or reintegration of handicapped workers;
- by means of a Grand Ducal Ruling the determination of the form and contents of measures of placement, training or retraining, as well as measures of initiation or training periods of adaptation or readaptation to work;
- raising of the rate of compulsory employment for the benefit of handicapped workers in the public and private sectors;
- organisation and adaptation of the staff framework of the employment administration in view of the reinforcement of the service for the handicapped by specialised staff;
- creation of a legal framework for public assistance which collectives or private bodies can benefit from.

### Minimum social wage

The Minister of Labour has presented a bill to the Council of Ministers for adoption. The bill modifies article 14 of the amended law of 12.3.73 concerning the minimum wage.

The accompanying report states that in the period 1984 - 1989, there was a discrepancy of 7.45% in the rate of increase between the minimum wage and the average salary. The bill provides for an increase of 7.5% for the minimum social wage.

### Voluntary part-time work

Besides the bill on handicapped workers, the bill on the subject of voluntary part-time work is also a priority for the Minister of Labour. In 1990, the Parliamentary Employment Commission had practically completed its review of the bill following the amendments introduced by the Government.

The Social Affairs Council of the EC is presently occupied with two proposed directives on the subject of "atypical" work. In December 1990, a

third directive was adopted by the Ministers on the subject of protection of health and safety of the workers holding "atypical" jobs.

The bill in Luxembourg is part of a strategy of free access to part-time work and so aims to remove obstacles in the way of this form of work. The main lines can be summarised as follows:

- the head of a company must consult the Joint Works Committee or the Workers' Delegation before creating part-time jobs;
- employees of the company concerned who have expressed interest in holding or resuming a part-time job should be informed first when such jobs become available;
- a full-time employee may not be dismissed for refusing to change to a part-time position;
- regulations concerning the contents of part-time employment contracts;
- ruling on the subject of overtime;
- the rights of part-time workers in matters of payment, rights linked to years of service, calculation of departure allowance and the length of the trial period for part-time workers;
- regulations concerning part-time workers' representation in employees' representative bodies.

### Temporary work

The Minister of Labour hopes to see the adoption of a bill within the near future dealing with the regulation of temporary work. This bill defines the status of temporary workers so as to ensure this group of workers adequate social protection whilst maintaining the necessary flexibility in companies to meet fluctuations in economic activity. In this framework, four objectives constitute the basis of the bill:

- definition of a limited framework of access to temporary work;
- guaranteed uniformity of treatment for temporary and permanent staff;
- assurance of a better regulation of atypical work;
- improper use of temporary workers will be penalised.

If necessary, this bill will have to be reviewed in the light of the aforementioned EC directives. The proposals have the same aims as those considered by the Commission for these forms of work i.e. part-time work, temporary work and fixed-term work.

## OVERALL DEVELOPMENTS

### Netherlands

#### Labour market problems in large cities

There is a significant qualitative difference between supply and demand on the labour market in areas where large cities are situated. The relationship between the number of jobs and the labour force indicates that a high level of employment opportunities is coupled with high unemployment. In large cities in the west of the country where the unemployment rate is high,

more than half of the vacancies are difficult to fill.

Since the beginning of 1991, the Central Employment Board (*CBA*) has been responsible for employment policy (cf. iM 31), which is determined in collaboration with 28 Regional Boards (*RBA*s). For 1991, targets have been defined for each *RBA*, including the number of vacancies to be filled and how many of these should be filled by the unemployed, *LTUs*, women and ethnic minorities. With this in mind, it is important to portray the (discrepancies in the) labour market situation for each *RBA*.

### Netherlands

#### Employment Service opts for better quality

A high priority for the Employment Service is the improvement of the quality of services rendered at its offices. There is therefore a negligible rise in the number of vacancies to be filled by the employment offices in 1992. The target for next year has been set at 144,500 successfully filled vacancies, of which 108,500 (75%) should be filled by unemployed persons. A considerable increase is however expected for the years 1993 - 1996, by which time the improved quality must produce concrete results. This is stated in the National Long - term Policy Framework 1992 - 1996 established by the Central Employment Board (*CBA*).

The employment service wants to improve quality in the long term above all by an attuned provision of services for each individual client, whether this is an employer or jobseeker. This means providing continuous services to the client by the employment office.

In the short term the improved quality will assume a tangible form by solving the avoidable problem of "file pollution" within two years. An inventory of the problems of difficult-to-fill vacancies will be made and combated. The good provision of information, geared to making the labour market more transparent for clients must lead to improved quality. Finally, according to the *CBA*, another important contribution to higher quality will be made as a result of collaboration with sectoral and branch organisations, and with other bodies in the field of job placement, schooling and choice of training and profession.

#### Targets

In the years to come, employment policy will be

more systematically and intensively geared to preventing and solving bottlenecks in staffing. Cooperation with the sectors is a fundamental part of this policy. The objective for 1995 is that 20% of the vacancies in *SME*s should be filled by the Employment Service.

The *CBA*'s target for 1994 is to fill 108,500 vacancies with *LTUs*, ethnic minorities and women. As the expectation is that this targeted, proportionate outflow of women will already be achieved in 1991, the employment service simply has to maintain this level. In this way it is possible to concentrate efforts more so on the *LTUs* and the ethnic minorities.

#### Youth measures

The employment service will play their part in an active labour market policy for young persons. The employment offices will attempt to prevent young persons from joining the ranks of the long-term unemployed. The intention is help young persons to find regular work through active placement and the use of available measures at the beginning of their period of unemployment. Consequently a minimum number of young persons should be referred to jobs in the framework of the Youth Employment Guarantee Act (cf. article in this issue).

#### Strategic discussions

The *CBA* foresees discussions in the years to come with the Regional Employment Boards (*RBA*s) on the subjects of policy on ethnic minorities, sectoral policy and the future role of the employment service in the context of changes in the implementation of social security. Strategic policy on matching and schooling will be taken into consideration. The *CBA* sees the role of the *RBA*s as essential for the development and effectiveness of an organisation which confronts

the problems on the labour market head on.

### Budgets

For 1992 the Employment Service has a State contribution of HFL 1,900 million at its disposal. Expenditure is spread over staff costs (HFL 445 million), operational costs (HFL 827 million) and costs of the measures (HFL 1,087 million). From 1993, the State will contribute HFL 1,800 million. The budget for the centrally operating

CBA has been set at HFL 633 million for 1992. This budget covers the costs of national regulations such as the Apprenticeship Vocational Training Grants Scheme (*BVL*, cf. iM 31) and the Sectoral Training Grants Scheme (*Bijdrageregeling Bedrijfstakgewijze Scholing - BBS*), which add up to HFL 310 million, and the costs of the central office (HFL 55 million). The budget for the regionally operating RBAs amounts to HFL 1,281.9 million.

## AID TO THE UNEMPLOYED

### Denmark

#### Changes in the unemployment insurance regulations

On 31.5.91, the *Folketing* (the Danish Parliament) adopted legislation which changed the regulations on supplementary unemployment benefits and the financing of benefits in connection with temporary lay-offs.

#### Supplementary unemployment benefits

Supplementary unemployment benefits are those paid to full-time insured persons who have only been able to obtain part-time employment. Before 1989 it was, in principle, possible to receive supplementary unemployment benefits for an unlimited period of time. In 1989, a time limit for payment of supplementary benefits was introduced so that full-time insured persons who were permanently working less than full-time could receive supplementary benefits for a maximum of 78 weeks within a two-year period. The new legislation further reduces this period to 52 weeks within the preceding 70 weeks.

#### Temporary lay-off

The other change in the unemployment insurance regulations concerns unemployment benefits in connection with temporary lay-offs. The employees have a right to unemployment benefits from the first day of unemployment if they are members of an unemployment insurance fund (cf. BIR Denmark Ch.II.3). As the unemployment insurance system is mainly financed by the state, employers have to a large extent temporarily laid off their workers in connection with for instance bad weather, low season, lack of materials or similar situations (cf. BIR Denmark ii.2). The workers have then been receiving unemployment benefits although they were still in reality attached to the employer and could expect to return to work for him again.

In order to avoid this unintended use of the

publicly financed unemployment insurance system, the legislation was changed in 1989 so that the employers have to pay special compensation for the first day of unemployment in connection with temporary lay-offs or dismissals provided that the employees have been employed with that employer for one week within the preceding four weeks.

Under the new regulations the employer will have to pay for the first two days with effect from 1.7.93. The employment requirement has been increased to two weeks within the preceding four weeks with effect from 1.7.91.

## Denmark

### Training allowance to young unemployed persons

The regulations on training allowances to unemployed persons under the age of 25 have been changed with effect from 1.7.91 (cf. BIR Denmark i.4). Under the old regulations, young persons were entitled to a training allowance after nine months' unemployment. Under the new regulations

it will be possible for young persons to undergo training while receiving a training allowance after only six months of unemployment.

The new regulations have been introduced because it is assumed that the young persons will be more motivated for training if it is offered at an earlier stage. The training allowance corresponds with 50% of the unemployment benefits and is payable for up to 2 years.

## Spain

### Collaboration of social partners in vocational training

A number of changes derive from the new legal framework for practical vocational training in Spain as regulated by the Royal Decree 1618/1990 of 14.12.90 (cf. iM 34). These include the participation of employers' organisations and trade unions in the implementation of the National Training and Vocational Integration Plan (*Plan FIP*; cf. "Plan FIP: Results for the 1986-1990 period" in this issue), which is stated under article 22 of the Decree. This will be achieved by means of triennial programme contracts signed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the aforementioned organisations.

In the Order of 1.4.91, the fundamental principles are set out which now govern the cooperation between the National Employment Institute (*INEM*) and the social partners, through programme contracts. The most important elements are:

- actions in the field of practical vocational training, to be realised within the framework and priorities of *Plan FIP*;
- the possibility for the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to conclude direct programme

contracts with the Centres of Vocational Training in which the social partners participate;

- the inclusion, in programme contracts, of priorities in the field of practical vocational training based on sectoral collective agreements, which apply to the signatories of the programme contract
- the creation of a tripartite commission for the diffusion, execution and monitoring of each programme contract;
- the participation of the signatory organisations in the evaluation and monitoring of the actions of practical vocational training, for which the corresponding organisation is responsible;
- the possibility of participation of these organisations in:
  - maintenance and up-dating of data of the Permanent Observatory for Occupational Trends (cf. iM 30);
  - carrying out sectoral studies which aim to identify the present and future training needs of different production sectors;
  - carrying out actions for the labour market integration of school leavers;
  - the development of actions for qualifications and vocational orientation.

## Spain

### Plan FIP: results for the 1986-1990 period

The main instrument of the Government's policy on practical vocational training is *Plan FIP*, the National Training and Vocational Integration

Plan which was launched in 1985 (cf. BIR Spain iv.1, for latest developments: iM 30, 31, 34). It is managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and its overall objective is to incorporate vocational training activities in an active employment policy.

The following results were achieved for the 1986-1990 period. Participants trained during this period total 1,376,070 excluding those participants who signed up for training without having a plan recognized by the National Employment Institute (*INEM*) or those at Workshop Schools and youth training centres (*BIR Spain iv.2*).

After the initial year 1986, during which 168,325 participants were trained, the average annual number of participants completing courses was 301,936. The highest figure was registered in 1988 with 349,229 participants. From 1988 onward, the rate of increase moderated and the number of participants showed a tendency to stabilize, which led to an improvement in the management and quality of training.

The income to cover expenditure, recorded in the accounts of *INEM*, was raised from the Vocational Training Contributions (cf. iM 30) paid by employers and employees and the contributions made by the European Social Fund.

## Noteworthy aspects

In a more detailed analysis of the vocational courses and the participants trained during the 1986-1990 period, the following aspects are significant:

1. Beneficiary groups: It is noted that the established guidelines were fulfilled as regards priority groups (young people, the long-term unemployed, workers affected by rationalization processes) and the attention paid to continued training within firms.
2. Programmes: The relative number of programmes directed at combating long-term unemployment has increased. Vocational Training programmes aimed at the self-employed and corporate personnel have increased considerably from 11.2% of the total of the participants trained in 1986 to 20.5% of those trained in 1990. The effort devoted to the training of trainees is significant.
3. Gender and age-group: There was a notable increase in the number of women participating in training activities. Whereas in 1985 they represented 34.4% of the total number of participants trained, in 1990 this proportion rose to 50.6%. The percentage of trained participants over the age of 25 increased from 46.3% in 1986 to 49.7% in 1989, implying a consequent decrease in the relative numbers of young people participating in training activities.
4. Level of training: The majority of participants following vocational courses (30%) concentrate on general basic education (*Educación General Básica - EGB*). In 1986, 25% of participants had completed studies of a lower level than or equivalent to the *EGB* school certificate; this percentage fell to 17% in 1990. By contrast, the other groups, including those having in intermediate or higher qualifications, grew in

both absolute and relative terms over the same period.

5. Professional status: The number of unemployed persons following vocational courses fell in relative terms from 75.5% of the total *FIP* trainee population in 1986 to 68.4% in 1990, owing largely to the promotion of recurrent training. Within the group of the unemployed, those who have previous work experience showed an increase since 1988, particularly in the case of those in receipt of loans: these rose from 21.1% in 1986 to 26.4% in 1990. The number of participants who found work, showed a tendency to increase, the majority of them had found permanent jobs.
6. Economic sector: The trend in participants trained, measured according to this variable, ran in parallel with the expectations of employment in the various sectors. Thus, the greatest increase was produced in the service sector, where the share in total numbers of participants rose from 57.3% in 1986 to 63.9% in 1990. In the building sector, from 1988 onward, an upward tendency was noted, correlating with the expansion of that sector over the same period.
7. Success rate: The percentage of participants completing their courses as compared with the total number of participants dropping out rose from 81.5% in 1986 to 92.5% in 1990. As regards participants not completing their courses, in 39% of courses the reason was their having obtained a job. With minor fluctuations, 91% of all participants who remained on their courses until the end completed them successfully.
8. Length of course: Over the 1988-1990 period, the average length of courses increased slightly due to a rise in the number of courses lasting more than 400 hours. The average course length in 1990 was 383 hours.
9. Occupational groups: Most participants were trained in occupational groups with the best job prospects.

Finally, in 1990, *Plan FIP* was made subject to regulation by Royal Decree (cf. iM 34). As compared with annually revised Ministerial Orders, the Royal Decree incorporates important innovations. These innovations are the fruit of the agreements achieved in the social dialogue of February 1990. These include programmes directed at disadvantaged groups (cf. iM 30) and the creation of new legally binding programme contracts, to run for three years and intended to promote recurrent training on the basis of more extensive participation by employers' organisations and trade unions in the execution of *Plan FIP* (cf. "Collaboration of social partners in vocational training" in this issue).



# JOB CREATION

## Netherlands

### CBA experiment with "rule-free" regions

As an experiment, the cabinet will propose that the Central Employment Board (CBA) grants more freedom to two regions, which have yet to be chosen, in their attempts to help LTUs find work. More freedom does not mean that all rules can and will be lifted. For example, it must be clear that those persons who have the most difficulties finding work will receive the most help and that

the allocation of funds will have to be justified.

Three regulations can be included in the experiment. Firstly, the Framework Regulation Integration into Working Life - *KRA* (cf. iM 29) and the Temporary Work Compensation Scheme - *VU* (cf. iM 30) which can exempt employers from contributions if they employ an LTU. Thirdly, the regulation on labour pools for persons who have been unemployed for longer than three years. In the experimental regions, it may be possible for persons who have been unemployed for less than three years to participate in labour pools.

## Netherlands

### Labour pools - experiment and amendment

Labour pools constitute the tail-piece of regulations which aim to help unemployed persons obtain paid work. Participants in the scheme are given a permanent employment contract with the labour pool organisation and receive supernumerary jobs in the public or non-profit-making sectors. This approach prevents unfair competition and the substitution of LTUs for regular employees. For a 38 hour week, they are eligible for the statutory minimum wage, for a shorter working week the wages are proportionately less. For some of the labour pool participants there may be prospects of transition to a regular job (cf. iM 32).

#### Experiment

An experiment which was conducted in 1989 and 1990 in the cities of Rotterdam, Nijmegen and Dordrecht indicated that labour pools can be useful in the fight against long-term unemployment. They give some an opportunity to be involved in work again. The experiment aimed to offer jobs to those unemployed persons whose prospects on the labour market were particularly poor.

Results of the research which was carried out by Rotterdam's social services, indicate that the requisite jobs could be created without any problems. There were also enough unemployed persons who were willing and able to accept a job in the context of the experiment. What is striking is that only 32% of the persons who underwent a reorientation interview (heroriënteringsgesprek) were finally placed in a labour pool. Further re-

search seems to be necessary in order to discover whether the labour pools only reach the LTUs who are most likely to find a job. This is all the more important as the labour pool regulation is a relatively expensive one.

#### Amendment to the systeem

An amendment to the *Vermeend/Moor* Law, which was passed by the First Chamber (Upper House) makes exemptions from payment of social security contributions possible for employers who employ labour pool participants. Until now, contributions from the State and the Regional Employment Board (*RBA*) have co-financed the regulation, whereas the newly introduced exemption from contributions on the basis of the *Vermeend/Moor* Act can also add to the financing. Besides, for every unemployed person who works through the pool, the labour pool organisation as employer receives the State share in the benefit of the person concerned and an annual subsidy of HFL 7,000. The *RBAs* can make an additional sum of HFL 3,500 available for every participant.

# Centrefold

## ACROSS COMMUNITY BORDERS

### **Cross-border cooperation of employment services in the European Community**

Every day, there are in the region of 250,000 workers crossing over Community borders to work in other member states or third countries. Half of this traffic is concentrated on the German-Austrian and German-Swiss borders.

Prior to 1980, cross-border cooperation consisted essentially of settling road transport problems and issues of fiscal and social coverage. Since then, public employment agencies in the border areas have been developing cross-border cooperation with their counterparts and services for the promotion of the mobile citizen.

This review indicates the nature and state of cross-border cooperation in early 1991, as a forerunner of more continuous reporting to come in future issues of inforMISEP.

In iM 33 (Spring 1990), an article appeared on the cooperation agreement between employment offices in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg (North Germany) and South Jutland (Denmark). The aim of this agreement is to intensify the cross-border placement cooperation between the two regions and to exchange job offers through the computerised placement system "Job Euro Transfer". In this issue, there is an article which deals with the cooperation between Dutch and Belgium employment offices: EUROLOKET.

## The economic contexts

An economic distinction needs to be drawn between the flourishing border areas (basically in the Southern Rhine area) and the more backward areas (the typical border situation). In the former, the public employment offices are requested by individual employers over the border to find suitable jobseekers, with (at least in the German case) an increasing requirement of pre-selection. Unlike Germans, Swiss employers are not too concerned with formal qualifications, but focus rather on the quality of the individual's work performance. This, together with shorter periods of notice, means that the Swiss employer is more likely to risk hiring persons with apparently less-than-complete abilities. However, older workers are rarely considered because employer-paid pension rights are extremely high.

Movements are encouraged by significant wage differentials (German and Swiss employers pay the most) up to supervisory level (up to 50% more). Cross-border workers decide where to pay taxes (higher tax rates in Germany do not influence the situation).

Cross-border movements are concentrated in a small number of sectors, primarily building and, depending on the area, the hotel business, car manufacturing, graphic arts and health care. Particularly for sectors with considerable shortages of semi-skilled labour, agreements continue to be made with non-border foreign countries, eg. with Ireland and Poland in the hotel business. Women seem to be considerably more mobile (and enterprising) than men.

The catchment area can extend to 100 km. from the border. Due to shortcomings in infrastructures, company bussing is the rule.

Attempts have been made to counter illegal work by conducting border checks (Dutch and British nationals are mainly concerned). The introduction of the social security card in Germany helps, however, as there are hundreds of illegal labour suppliers, the authorities seem to be fighting a losing battle.

A careful distinction must be made between "foreign border workers" and the steadily growing group of "exported nationals". For example, due to lower land prices just outside Germany, the middle classes build houses just over the border and commute daily.

Whether there are formal borders or not, national legislation will remain important for employment in border areas. For instance, raising German petrol prices will reduce or eliminate the movement of cross-border citizens coming to fill their tanks and do other shopping.

## Information activities

The functions of the "public employment services" (PES) may differ from country to country. The German Employment Service (*BA*) combines the functions of public employment, payment of allowances and training service. Whereas its counterpart institutes over the border are specialised, and so individual services must learn to cooperate with different, sometimes separate bodies.

Formal agreements have been signed in some cross-border areas. The first was the *Pôle européen de Développement* in 1985 between Belgium, France and Luxembourg. The aim for the depressed area was to create 8,000 new jobs in a decade.

A number of agreements have been signed by the national PESs, specifying topics of local cooperation. One area is a part of the German-Dutch Euregio, whilst another links the regions of Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg with that of South Jutland. Agreements have been signed by Baden-Württemberg and Alsace, and finally by Flanders and several southern regions in the Netherlands. Subsequent to the German-Danish agreement, the Danish parliament amended its law to enable formal cooperation between the two services to take place within a legal framework.

Border regions' offices (on both sides) have produced information booklets on the meaning of working across the border: Germany-Denmark, Germany-France and Germany-Netherlands. The local *BA* offices along the Dutch border have set up a working group to produce even more concise information leaflets on 15 key topics, including comparisons of social security and training provisions. The booklets include references to more detailed sources of information.

Several offices have organised monthly or fortnightly "advice days" in their counterpart PES offices. The purpose is to enable potential cross-border workers to obtain information on both job opportunities and working in the other country. Some of the German offices concerned have now discontinued this service, because the bulk of the information requested far exceeded the competence of the employment officer (*Vermittler*), i.e. information on taxes, allowances, housing conditions, etc.

At the same time, local bodies which are able to provide such information have been reinforced. For instance, whereas the local Nijmegen-Kleve (NL-D) cross-border cooperation organisation could previously only afford the services of one secretary, membership fees have been increased so that it now has four full-time officials, all of whom are specialised

in providing cross-border information services.

More often than not, occupations which appear to be the same in two countries are not: physiotherapists, nurses, masons, etc. Differences are so significant that a qualified person cannot be hired for the same occupation (on paper) in the neighbouring country. To help overcome such complications between Germany and Denmark, the local German employment office has arranged information meetings on occupations for staff of the Danish employment offices (AF).

## Training cooperation

Cooperation for training appears to be fruitful where there is a similar or complementary need on each side of the border. Most Franco-Italian cooperation for example is concerned with training.

Activities have been undertaken unilaterally and jointly. France's training organisation (AFPA) has run language courses in German for French jobseekers on a unilateral basis. The BA and the Dutch Employment Service (ARBVO) have conducted or been involved in designing and running four courses so far in fields which mutually benefit the participants from the metal and textile industries in both countries. The added value is two-fold: training facilities and resources do not need to be duplicated (as has happened in the Nijmegen-Kleve area because agreement has taken too long to reach), and participants learn each other's national language. However, those completing the courses have all taken jobs in their home country.

Shortages of trainees for German industrial, service and craft firms can be compensated by bringing in "border foreigners". This has been particularly important for craft firms in Schleswig-Holstein.

Problems of recognition of diplomas can be overcome by early involvement in the design of a programme of the responsible local bodies, this is the case for the chambers of commerce and industry in Germany particularly. In northern Germany, the *Eurosecretärin* programme (now in its second course) is recognised by diplomas which are awarded by three bodies: the local German chamber of commerce and industry, the Danish commercial school and the British Chamber of Commerce.

Specific programmes train the unemployed in the export field, they last 6 months at the Nancy chamber of commerce or 15 months in EuroMarketing in Schleswig-Holstein/Jutland in Danish (or German) and English.

Languages tend to be confined by borders. Where this does not apply (Austria and Switzerland), there is considerably more movement (except in the Belgian case). Communication is hampered by the lack of teaching of the border language in the other country. English has tended to be the first language taught in schools.

## Computerised services

Computerisation should facilitate the rapid and efficient matching of supply and demand for employment, however its effect so far has been irregular.

One of the first direct services provided by BA for counterpart services abroad was *Mikros*. *Mikros* is a closed (i.e. requiring the involvement of BA professionals) job vacancy service. It is available at several border area offices of the French ANPE, the Luxembourg ADEM, the Walloon FOREM, the Dutch ARBVO and the Danish AF. Information is updated on a daily basis, but the procedure is lengthy: it is mailed from the local BA office to Nuremberg, updated and sent to the foreign head office, which then mails it to the counterpart border office. Its time-consuming nature means that it has had little success as an instrument for fostering cross-border cooperation. Moreover, some local ANPE offices do not use it because they do not pay any mobility expenses for the unemployed to take up a job.

France's *Minitel* has also had limited success as an employment service instrument (the German equivalent videotext service being BTX). For, despite the fact that it is used extensively by French households as an instant source of information on entertainments, its business use is less significant.

Job Europe Transfer (JET) has recently been established to enable Danish and German national (half-open) systems of job vacancies to be transferred and trans-coded across borders overnight so that they are immediately available on screen. Its half-open character means that it does not contravene the strict German rules on private data protection, but helps employment markets to become more "transparent". It has led to an average of two placements per month from the Netherlands to Germany since its inception in late 1989. Employers have surged to use it to find rare skills, however its inability to fill such vacancies has generated further frustration with the public service. The ANPE is reluctant to adopt the system as it would mean yet another terminal in the office.

## Other instruments

Probably the most flourishing cross-border cooperation instrument is the telephone. Such direct contacts need to be backed up by regular face-to-face contacts between the offices concerned. The European Community programme of cross-border staff exchanges emphasises such contacts.

The Dutch non-profit-making foundation *START* hires the unemployed, notably the handicapped, for temporary work assignments. The majority are subsequently offered permanent employment. *START* has prospered to such an extent that its own staff (managing the hired-out staff) number 1,100. Over the last few years it has had an excess of income over expenditure which was ploughed back into new initiatives. It is now cooperating with a *BA* border office to establish itself in Germany for the benefit of German unemployed persons. Such temporary work is not popular with the German trade unions.

## The future

Public employment offices tend to be insufficiently involved in the mainstream of other cross-border activities. Involvement in border fairs and other economic and cultural activities is considered important for the future.

A better way of preparing for the future is to examine economic trends by sectors rather than by professions and trades (as has been the case so far in Germany).

Legal obstacles remain: paragraph 34 of the German Employment Promotion Act (*AFG*) on "territoriality" forbids the use of funds for measures outside Germany. This has been challenged (for financing the joint training programme with *ARBVO* around Enschede) but upheld, though an administrative compromise has been reached in this case.

## United Kingdom

### New measures to assist unemployed people

On 19.6.91, the Employment Secretary announced a new package of measures to assist unemployed people. The package aims to help 190,000 unemployed people in the remainder of 1991/92 (i.e. until 31.3.92) at a cost of UKL 100 million, and 250,000 unemployed people the following fiscal year at a cost of UKL 230 million. The package includes a wide range of measures designed to meet the differing needs of unemployed people. The main element is a new work experience programme, Employment Action.

#### Employment Action Programme

The first places on the Employment Action programme are planned for 1.10.91, rising to 30,000 places by the end of March 1992, with another 30,000 places next year (1992-1993). Until 31.3.92 it is planned to help 40,000 people, but in a full year it is intended to cater for 60,000 people. The programme will focus on those persons who have been unemployed for more than six months, with particular emphasis on Inner Cities. Participants will receive a payment calculated on the same basis as for Employment Training, i.e. they will continue to receive their current benefit al-

lowance plus an extra UKL 10 per week (cf. iM 23). A prospectus inviting Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and voluntary bodies to participate has been launched in early July. The scheme, which is voluntary, will offer temporary work on projects of benefit to the local community, help with finding a job, plus appropriate training. Participants will remain on the scheme for an average of six months.

#### Placement

Several new Employment Service measures are also included in the package. An extra 40,000 Jobclub places will be provided this year, with an additional 60,000 next year (1992-1993), designed to meet the needs of specific groups including white collar workers and executives. There will be an extra 15,000 places on Restart courses this year and 20,000 next year (cf. BIR United Kingdom iii.5). Help will be provided for 80,000 newly unemployed people this year and 110,000 next year in looking for work and in assessing their career options.

As to Employment Training itself, an extra 15,000 training places will be provided this year, with priority given to those with literacy or numeracy difficulties.

## SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF WORKERS

### Belgium

#### Projects for LTUs in Flanders (Part II)

In the framework of special projects of vocational orientation and training for LTUs in Flanders, the last issue of InforMISEP described developments in the fields of jobclubs and "Weerwerk" (cf. iM 34). A third specific programme for this target group will be the subject of this article, namely, integration training projects (*schakelopleidingen*).

#### Origin and development

Since the early 1980s, various political bodies have taken note of the major share (60%) that persons with little schooling hold in the population of unemployed jobseekers as a whole. It can be said that the retraining and training networks have reached this group to only a limited extent. A more specific approach for this group proved necessary.

Within the various subregional employment committees in Flanders, more and more attention was paid to developing a concrete remedy to the socio-economic shortcomings of this large group of unemployed persons with little educational background. It is certainly very difficult for them to find employment on the labour market, which can for instance be explained by the lack of basic knowledge, skills and attitudes that the employers require.

The idea was subsequently born to organise training courses which are not directly geared to the labour market. Initially, it seemed preferable to divide the target group of persons with little schooling into two age-groups, i.e. under 25s and over 25s. However, in 1986 this division was abolished.

In 1983 a pilot project got off the ground in the Limburg region and other projects were rapidly

## SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF WORKERS

developed in Flanders. They were subsequently evaluated and extended so that in 1990 there were 27 centres for training projects.

At the time, the National Employment Office (*ONEm*) (since then the Flemish Office of Employment and Vocational Training - *VDAB*, and the Walloon Community and Regional Vocational Training and Employment Service - *FOREM* have been established) played a central role in these actions in collaboration with other training bodies. To give priority to the realisation of vocational training that is indirectly geared to the labour market, the *VDAB* has been empowered with extra financial means for these projects (eg. by the European Social Fund).

### Aims and target group

The integration projects have the basic aim of increasing capacities, skills and motivation so as to:

- ensure the possibilities of integration into various vocational training courses (*VDAB*, secondary vocational education, education in social advancement) and/or into jobs;
- to instill a greater capacity for autonomy and better social skills in the course members.

Since 1.3.87, the integration projects have been solely geared to those persons who receive full benefits and who have been unemployed for more than one year.

The other criteria for a person starting on an integration training are that the person must:

- be unqualified;
- have completed primary education or lower secondary vocational education;
- be between 18 and 40 years;
- be motivated to leave the unemployment-system.

### Programme, methods and duration

A training cycle covers 14 weeks (30 hours/week). The programme consists of several phases:

#### 1. Technical training:

16 hours of training per week, orientated towards the practical side, specifically geared to re-exercising the main methods of finding work in the technical field, working method, safety and reading of technical drawings. In the technical lessons a lot of attention is paid to work attitudes and quality.

The choices of technical activities concentrate on the work possibilities and regional training. There are initial technical training courses for: metalurgy, welding, electrical installations, sanitary installations, painting, economics, sewing, technical drawing, stone masonry, ceiling installation, carpentry, introduction to new technologies. Moreover, there are training courses which are directly geared to the labour market:

- salesperson specialised in clothes alterations;
- all-round labourer; these courses are combined with different techniques, eg. electricity, metallurgy, welding, sanitary installation, stone masonry, foundation

worker;

- warehouse worker;
- industrial cleaning technician, courses for the professional maintenance of buildings; these courses consist of various modules of professional maintenance with 10 days of practical;
- kitchen hand; serving staff in the hotel and catering industry;
- course of introduction to computing: aimed more at making computer science easier to understand and to have more chances on the labour market. These courses include a two-week training period in a company.

#### 2. Mathematics:

To remedy the shortcomings in elementary operations. These courses are aimed particularly at employment and as a refresher for arithmetic knowledge, eg. rule of three, fractions, the metric system, elementary geometry, basic problems. These courses are developed according to the technical standards.

#### 3. Language:

To develop possibilities of linguistic communication and its usage as a functional tool in social and technical training.

Teaching activities consist of: learning to gather information, oral expression, written expression, broadening the vocabulary, evaluation of information, editing letters, expressing oneself during a job interview.

This year the *VDAB* began in six centres with specific Dutch language courses for immigrants adapted to the level of the trainees in order to facilitate their entry into the integration training projects.

#### 4. Social training:

Concentrates on employment and profession as well as significant social fields. The emphasis is on the preparation and guidance of trainees towards a follow-up training course or a place in the labour market. Together with the trainees, four themes are explored:

- unemployment: regulations and *VDAB* services;
- job applications: basic aims when applying for jobs;
- possible training: different possibilities for training;
- work: work regulations in the different sectors, company management, job protection. Information will be provided on each theme related to basic aspects and necessary attitudes. For the past two years personal guidance has also been given, which has led to even more positive results.

Ten basic objectives for job applications can be summarised as follows:

- know the various sources where vacancies appear and use these sources actively;
- know how to analyse and assess the job vacancies;



- know how to write a letter of application, draw up a C.V. and fill in an application form;
- know how to conduct an interview;
- be aware of the selection procedure;
- learn to present oneself as a potential employee;
- draw up and use an active, personal plan to find a job;
- apply for a job based on an advertisement corresponding to one's level;
- know how to evaluate one's own conduct and experience after an application;
- be aware of the advantages and legal protection as an unemployed person in search of work.

### 5. Attitudes:

Through exercises in the aforementioned disciplines attention is drawn to attitudes which play an important role in the work situation, such as a sense of autonomy, perseverance, productivity, sense of precision, punctuality, sense of rules and conventions, and the sense of team work and organisation. In view of the nature of the target group, an apprenticeship has been chosen based on experience and comprehension. Furthermore, the aim is to adapt the training to the level and progress of the trainees. The training programme is presented in a concrete way and the trainees are directly involved with both intellectual and practical activities. Regular exercises allow the transfer of knowledge, notions and skills which have been acquired in other situations.

### 6. Teaching methods/methodology:

In the same vein as the attitudes, teaching methods employed are classical teaching, demonstrative method, thematic teaching, dialogue, individual or group work, debates, role playing, guided visits. Training is always given in small groups (8 persons).

### Scale of the action

Taking into consideration that a training cycle of 14 weeks involves approximately 40 persons, 1989 saw a total of 3,580 participants spread over 27 projects. It is significant that most of the integration training projects are followed by women (more than 65%).

### Status of trainees

The trainees involved in the integration projects have the same status as trainees on vocational training courses, which means:

- a payment of BFR 40 for each hour of training followed;
- travelling expenses are reimbursed;
- trainees are insured against accidents at work;
- a payment of BFR 320 per day for care of children under two years.

### Staff

The training team consists of a project manager (psychologist or educationalist), a clerical worker, a social worker, a manager of general training and

two technical managers or two technicians (level A2).

### Recruitment and selection

Initially, the projects were publicised mainly by means of posters, folders distributed in the placement services, in regional and trade union newspapers as well as on independent radio stations.

Through the placement services of the VDAB, potential participants are invited to information sessions where they learn about objectives, the programme, methods and practical rules. The aim is also to make the unemployed persons aware of their situation and to contemplate possible solutions together.

The information session is followed by an in-depth interview in which the motivation of the potential trainee is evaluated.

This aspect is moreover the most important selection criterion.

### Training effects

After evaluating the effects of the traineeship it appears that the trainees have achieved positive results in the various disciplines. It is only by means of a mid-term follow-up of the ex-trainees that one can determine how lasting the results are, depending on the circumstances after the training. As far as the results in relation to the integration objectives are concerned, based on an evaluation for the period August 1989 until June 1990, it was found that approximately 65% of the ex-trainees found work or were following a further training course. The results can be summarised as follows:

- The objective of integration into the labour market was achieved for 43% of the total number of the trainees. Furthermore, 11% of the trainees found temporary work.
- The objective of integration into further training can be broken down as follows: 11% were integrated into VDAB vocational training and approximately 2% were integrated into social advancement education or guidance towards another training course.

The second objective is considered to be less successful, due to an excessively high threshold for vocational training centred directly on the labour market. It is important to stress that employment results vary according to regional differences.

At present, the VDAB is working on a new model to facilitate admission to vocational training courses in the secondary sector for those persons who have followed integration training courses.

### Belgium

#### Financial compensation for cross-border workers

The Royal Decree of 26.5.87 lays down an indemnity for cross-border workers working in France which is designed to compensate the loss of earnings due to exchange rate fluctuations between Belgian and French currencies. The Royal Decree of 22.3.91 (*Moniteur belge* of 6.4.91) has just extended the existence of this indemnity until the completion of the single market (1.1.93). The indemnity is granted to salaried workers who work in the French border area and who live in the Belgian border area which they, in theory, return to daily or at least once a week. The municipalities which constitute Belgian and French border areas are listed in an appendix of the Royal Decree of 26.5.86.

The amount of indemnity is BFR 2.05 for FF 1.0,

increased or reduced by a correction coefficient. This equals the difference between the average rate in the monetary system of the FF and BFR on the one hand, and the rate which is in fact applied by the official body responsible for the transfer of funds on the other hand.

For the month of March 1991 and taking the correction coefficient into account, the indemnity was BFR 2.25 for FF 1.0.

The indemnity is not granted for the part of monthly payment which is above the upper limit of FF 3,450.

For salaried workers who did not receive the compensatory indemnity for all or some of their earnings in January, February or March 1987, and who moreover during the 24 months prior to 1.4.87 did not receive this indemnity for all or some of their earnings for at least 12 months, the amount of indemnity is reduced to 15% as of 1.4.91. For these workers the compensatory indemnity will be granted until 31.12.91.

### Germany

#### Special programmes for LTUs in demand

The action programme "Employment Aids for LTUs" (cf. iM 27) which offers wage-cost subsidies of up to 80% to employers who take on LTUs has been very successful. By the end of April 1991, more than 62,000 grant applications had been submitted, almost 57,000 of which were approved. This means that the target of 60,000 to 70,000 grants which was originally set for the end of 1991 has now nearly been reached.

#### Increased and extended

The special programme has contributed to a significant fall in long-term unemployment (cf. iM 30). The target for 1991 is an intake of 35,000 LTUs on the programme. The special programme of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was drawn up in July 1989 and was originally to run until the end of 1991. However the programme has been extended until the end of 1993 and the amount made available has been increased by DM 650 million to a total programme budget of DM 2.15 billion (cf. iM 34).

#### Target group

Half of the LTUs concerned have been unemployed for between one and two years, the other half for two years or longer. The proportion of female participants has risen from 24.3%, when

the programme first came into force, to the present figure of 32.6%.

#### Scheme for difficult-to-place unemployed

The special programme of "Measures for the particularly disadvantaged LTUs and other very difficult-to-place unemployed persons" has also been extended until 31.12.94. An additional DM 240 million has brought its budget to a total of DM 490 million (cf. iM 31).

Wage-cost subsidies alone are not sufficient to place the target group of unemployed persons in employment. Therefore the measures consist of employment incentives, qualification and supervision. It is intended to increase the possible granting period for individual cases from two to five years.

Between July 1989 and February 1991, the granting of 346 applications from charitable or public institutions and organisations concerning about 14,100 participants was possible. This year about 250 applications for between 10,000 and 12,000 participants can be granted. The Federal Employment Service (BA) will extend the programme to the new federal states by promoting model measures in ten selected employment office areas, of which an important signal function is expected.

## Ireland

### Positive Action Programme for Women 1991

The FAS (National training and Employment Authority) launched a Positive Action Programme for Women 1991 on 15.7.91. The objectives of the Programme are aimed at encouraging increased female participation in traditionally male-dominated areas of employment, and at promoting women's participation at all levels within the labour market.

The outcome of the first FAS Positive Action Programme for Women in 1990 indicates a significant increase in the level of women's participation on FAS programmes:

- women comprised 41% of all persons on FAS Training Programmes in 1990 compared with 37% in 1989;
- on the Social Employment Scheme (cf. BIR Ireland vi.8), female participation exceeded a set target of 17% in 1990 compared with 14% in 1989;
- during 1990, there was also an increase in the number of women completing Return to Work courses.

The FAS Positive Action Programme for Women 1991 aims to build on the progress already made. Specific targets set under the programme for 1991 are as follows:

- 305 places have been targeted for women on

specific skills training courses traditionally dominated by men. (These include courses such as Electronic Servicing, Software Development and Road Freight Driving.) This represents an increase of 150% on the target set for 1990;

- the number of places to be provided on special pre-apprenticeship training programmes, aimed at encouraging suitable young women for apprenticeships is to be increased by 60%;
- the target for first-year off-the-job female apprentice places has been increased to 63, an increase of 58% on intake in 1990;
- for Employment Schemes, the main aim will be to increase the female participation rate where their representation is below that of the Live Register (i.e. register of the unemployed). The target participation rate for the Social Employment Scheme is 20% in 1991 compared with 17% in 1990;
- a target intake of 1,53 women has been set for programmes aimed at women wishing to return to the Labour Force;
- promotional campaigns aimed at schools, work, parents and girls will continue to encourage and promote women into non-traditional areas of work.

In the longer run, it is recognised that the Programme's success will depend upon the development and implementation of equal opportunity programmes in schools and industry.

## Ireland

### Area-based response to long-term unemployment

The European Social Affairs Council under the recent Irish Presidency attached a great deal of importance to the problem of long-term unemployment. The idea of an integrated approach and the need for innovation in this area were major themes in the European Community Resolution on action to assist the long-term unemployed. In addition to adopting a Resolution in May 1990, the Council endorsed the need to devote additional EC resources to alleviating the problem of long-term unemployment.

The Irish Government has now approved arrangements for initiating the area-based response to long-term unemployment in 12 areas on a pilot basis. The criteria for the selection of the pilot areas were as follows:

- a higher than average incidence of long-term

unemployment;

- structures and activities already in existence which could be integrated and developed;
- a wide geographical spread.

At the national level, there will be a small team representative of the Employers' Organisations, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, FAS (the Training and Employment Authority) and the Department of Education. This team will organise, monitor and co-ordinate the projects and report to the Central Review Committee.

At the local level, companies limited by guarantee and representative of local community interests, public agencies and the social partners will be set up to co-ordinate the response in each of the pilot areas. The pilot projects will be reviewed before the end of 1991 and will be progressively extended nationally on the basis of experience gained in the pilot areas.

### Netherlands

#### Youth Employment Guarantee Act

The First Chamber (Upper House) has approved the Youth Employment Guarantee Act (*JWG*; cf. iM 29). As of 1.9.91, all unemployed 16- and 17-year-olds and unemployed persons aged between 18 and 21 years, leaving educational institutions, will be offered a guaranteed job or training. To be eligible for this, the young persons must have been unemployed for at least six months. The scheme's target group will be extended each year, until 1998 when it will include all unemployed young persons aged up to 21 years and unemployed school-leavers up to 27 years. Through the *JWG*, young persons have a guarantee of work and income, so that a benefit is no longer necessary.

#### Conditions

Young persons who are eligible for a guaranteed job receive notification either from the municipal authorities or the employment office. They are employed by a *JWG* organisation and occupy a suitable guaranteed job for 32 hours per week. *JWG* organisations will be set up for each municipality or group of cooperating authorities. The jobs become available at local, provincial and central governmental levels or at institutions which are connected with the authorities such as fire brigades, hospitals, libraries and schools. To achieve guaranteed jobs in trade and industry, agreements have to be reached in the tripartite Regional Employment Boards (*RBAs*).

As a rule, one young person will hold a guaranteed job for between six and 12 months. At the end of six months, the possibility of transferring to a regular job or an apprenticeship will be reviewed. If, after 12 months, this proves impossible then transfer to another guaranteed job will ensue.

Guaranteed jobs are essentially in addition to

normal manpower capacity. Employers can offer *JWG* jobs if the representative advisory board consents. If there is no such board, then the rule applies that for every ten full-time jobs, there is a maximum of one guaranteed place. Small organisations with less than ten full-time jobs can introduce one guaranteed place.

#### Schooling

Schooling is essential in the *JWG*. The fact that young persons occupy such a weak position on the labour market is due not only to lack of work experience, but in many cases also to limited training. Upwards of 60% of all young persons who received a guaranteed place through the *TV-GWJ*, predecessor of the *JWG* (cf. iM 31) had not obtained any diplomas since primary school. In consultation with the young person it must be decided whether extra schooling is necessary and if so, which form would be suitable. The schooling must match the work at the guaranteed place as much as possible.

#### Financial aspects

Young persons with a guaranteed job receive the age-related minimum (youth) wage. The amount is based on the number of hours worked. If somebody repeatedly refuses or resigns from this sort of work experience place, the employment contract between the young person and the *JWG* organisation can be terminated. Afterwards, the person loses his/her eligibility for a benefit in principle for 13 weeks. Those who fail to find a normal job after all the effort made, receive an unemployment benefit at the end of the *JWG*.

Next year, the regulation will cost the State upwards of HFL 140 million, rising to HFL 400 million in 1998 when all young persons will be included in the scheme. Next year, an estimated saving of HFL 150 million will be made on the costs of benefits for young persons, that figure is estimated to rise to HFL 600 million in 1998.

## WORKING TIME

### Belgium

#### Compulsory replacement during career break

The career break allows a worker in the private sector to either totally or partially suspend his/

her professional activities for a certain period and to receive a career break allowance for this period (cf. BIR Belgium vii.3, iM 32). One of the essential conditions for the worker to benefit from this allowance is that the employer undertakes to replace him/her with an unemployed person in

receipt of full benefits (or in a similar situation) for the length of the total break or for the reduced number of hours.

## Sanction for failure to replace

When an employer fails to respect the commitment to replace the worker, the National Employment Office (*ONEm*) can demand lump sum damages due per month and per worker. This amounts to:

- in the case of a total break: the average minimum guaranteed monthly wage (BFR 37,595 on 1.3.91) when the worker receives a career break allowance equal to BFR 10,714, BFR 12,754 (break in the 6 years following the birth or adoption of a second child) or BFR 14,794 (break in the six years following birth or adoption after a second child);
- in the case of reduced working hours: half of the average minimum guaranteed monthly wage, when the worker receives an allowance of BFR 5,357, BFR 6,377 or BFR 7,397 respectively.

## Companies undergoing difficulties

For the companies which are recognised by the

Ministry of Employment and Labour as being in difficulties and bound by a restructuring plan, the Royal Decree of 25.4.91 (Moniteur belge of 4.5.91) sets the amount of lump sum damages in the following way:

- in the case of a total break: BFR 14,794 when the worker receives allowances of BFR 10,714, BFR 12,754 or BFR 14,794;
- in the case of reduced working hours: BFR 7,397 when the worker receives an allowance of BFR 5,357, BFR 6,377 or BFR 7,397.

The aforementioned companies in difficulties must fulfil the following conditions:

- have registered an operating loss before tax in the annual accounts of the two trading periods prior to the date of the application for recognition as such; in the case of considerable losses, only the last period is included in calculations;
- be bound by a restructuring plan approved by the Council of Ministers;
- have proceeded, during restructuring plans, to redundancies for at least 10% of the total staff numbers.

# PLACEMENT

## Belgium

### Local employment agencies and seasonal work

With the aim of helping farmers and horticulturalists during the periods which correspond to peaks in their work calendars (plantation and harvesting times) and also with the aim of suppressing the circuits of unofficial work in the sector, the Ministerial Decree of 8.5.91 (Moniteur belge of 24.5.91) gives unemployed persons who are registered at local employment agencies (*ALEs*) the chance of carrying out seasonal work in 1991.

Employment can be arranged for the following groups of unemployed persons by the *ALEs* without any consequent loss of unemployment benefits:

- unemployed persons in receipt of full benefits for at least 12 months, registered as jobseekers;
- unemployed persons aged 55 years or over, or 50 years or over if they have proof of a permanently reduced capacity to work and who have received unemployment benefits for at least 624 days during the 48 months prior to their request for exemption from signing on

and other regulatory obligations.

The work which the aforementioned unemployed persons are authorised to carry out must be carried out for the needs of individuals or associations and consist of activities which would otherwise not be conducted. Furthermore, the unemployed person receives a lump-sum allowance of BFR 160 per hour paid for by the person employing his/her services.

### Germany

#### Computer-aided job placement "heads east"

Modern computers are being phased in to assist the placement activities of employment offices in the new part of the Federal Republic. The employment office in Jena was the first in the new federal states to be connected to the system of the computer-aided job placement (*computerunterstützte Arbeitsvermittlung - coArb*, cf. iM 18).

##### Implementation steps of coArb

With the introduction of *coArb* at the employment office in Jena, methods are being applied which are both new and specially adapted to the situation in the new federal states. As opposed to the procedure in the old federal states, where the various steps of *coArb* had been implemented consecutively, in Jena, all available procedural steps were introduced simultaneously. These are:

1. the computerised management of applications and vacancies;
2. the automatic storage of placement proposals;
3. computerised correspondence (eg. standard letters); and
4. the use of data on benefit recipients to facilitate job placement and counselling.

At the same time the requirements are met for the computerised compilation of statistics on placements, vacancies and jobseekers, whereby all useful *coArb* applications take effect. The Head Office of the Federal Employment Service (BA) in Nuremberg, the Central Employment Service in Berlin and the employment office in Jena collaborated closely to achieve this.

##### Input of jobseeker information

The aim was to keep the period of training and conversion as short as possible. Therefore, whilst the system was being installed in Jena, the input of data on the individual jobseekers was being carried out in another office in the western part of the Federal Republic. The employment office in Mönchengladbach offered its services for the task as it had just introduced step 3 of *coArb* and had a core of input-trained staff at its disposal. The input of the information on jobseekers in Jena took place in March and April 1991.

##### Training for coArb-users

While this data input was being carried out, the staff from the employment office in Jena followed the same training course for *coArb*-users as their colleagues in the western part of the Federal Republic. In addition, the working group responsible for central training in data processing together with the corresponding department at the BA Head Office developed a special computer-based training programme. The staff in Jena had had access to this programme on their personal computers since the beginning of March to allow individual preparation for the user training. The Jena model will be applied in all new parts of the Federal Republic. The computerised link with eight other employment offices is envisaged for 1991.

##### Information system

In addition to *coArb* and for the first time in Germany, a videodisc system has been made available in Jena, giving access to information on placement and employment counselling to everybody who is interested. Visitors to the employment office can themselves obtain information with the videodisc player on questions of the labour market, application procedures and other BA facilities. At the press of a button the player displays the requested information in the form of short film fragments. It ensures that information is accessible to the jobseeker at a time when he/she needs it. The following information can be retrieved:

- Unemployed - what do I do?
- How do I find a job?
- How does the employment office work?
- Application tips.
- Interview tips.

##### Job Information Service

Preparations have also begun in Jena for the installation of the Job Information Service (*Stellen-Informationen-Service - SIS*, cf. iM 25). The system will probably become operative in December, when the placement service will be able to offer the most modern services currently available in Germany to those seeking advice. Services include job vacancies for self-search, telephones for rapid contact with employers and extensive counselling facilities.

### Italy

#### Recruitment in the public administration

Certain modifications have been made to the

classification lists (*graduatorie*) which must be consulted when selecting jobseekers for jobs in public administrations. The classification lists as laid down in article 16 of law 56/87 of 28.2.87 (cf.

im 18) have been amended and are regulated under article 1, paragraph 7 of the new law 407 of 29.12.90. This new law regulates the employment of workers in public employment.

In northern and central regions, 30% of available jobs in this sector must now be reserved for those persons who are on the classification lists and who have been receiving assistance from the Special

Wage Integration Fund (*Cassa Integrazione Salariale Straordinaria*) for more than 12 months. This regulation will apply for three years. The unemployed jobseekers are called up from a special list of candidates drawn up on the basis of criteria and modalities which are set by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in consultation with the Treasury.

## Netherlands

### Guideline for better application of suitable work

The Minister and the Under-secretary for Social Affairs and Employment want a better application of the concept "suitable work" for the unemployed. A guideline has been drawn up which can be used by employment offices, industrial insurance boards and social services. The guideline indicates for instance that the longer the period of unemployment, the more one should be prepared to accept work at a progressively lower level. So far, the aforementioned bodies have judged whether work is suitable in a particular case for an unemployed person, on the basis of legal criteria and judicial pronouncements.

The Cabinet considers the criteria for suitable work which are upheld in the labour law to be sufficient and to require no further legislation. Nor is it concerned with a tightening up of the criteria but with better application of them to combat long-term unemployment, to improve the matching of supply and demand on the labour market and to remove bottlenecks when filling vacancies.

On the basis of the new guideline, the Cabinet wants to reach agreements with the bodies which administer benefits and the employment offices. It is intended that the guideline be included on the agenda of the information meetings of the Regional Employment Boards (*RBAs*) for the employees of for example employment offices, industrial insurance boards and social services.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Belgium / Netherlands

#### Cross-border cooperation: EUROLOKET

In October 1990, employment services from border areas of the EC countries took part in a conference in San Remo; its aim was to further cross-border cooperation. A report which the Flemish and Dutch employment services (*VDAB* and *ARBVO* respectively) co-produced, by European Commission order, made a major contribution to the conference. The report concentrated in particular on cross-border placement and schooling, the difficulties experienced by cross-border workers and possible solutions to existing problems. As a result of the report, a project proposal has been formulated for more intensive cooperation between the Netherlands and Belgium in the fields of placement and schooling - EUROLOKET.

The initiators of EUROLOKET have focussed on the following actions:

- structural exchange of vacancies;
- primarily, the provision of social security information for jobseekers;
- provision of information about contents and comparability of education and vocational training courses which both employment services can offer.

The proposal is to initiate a three-year pilot project in three areas along the Belgian-Dutch border. The following three areas are eligible for participation:

- *ARBVO* Breda Region - *VDAB* Turnhout;
- *ARBVO* Zeeland Region - *VDAB* East/West Flanders;
- *ARBVO* South Limburg Region - *VDAB* Tongeren.



## INTERNATIONAL

In each area, a project group will be set up for each field of action. Project leaders from the *VDAB* and *ARBVO* will be responsible for the coordination of the entire project. The development of tools is essential to increase the project's chances of success. The objective will be to give employment offices access to computerised data, such as the Job Euro Transfer system (JET) for cross-border job vacancies and the Data Euro Transfer

system (DET) for cross-border information exchange.

An application will be made to the EC's INTERREG programme to cover some of the costs of the EUROLOKET project. Interreg's objective is to stimulate the establishment and development of networks for cross-border cooperation in the EC, within the framework of the completion of the internal market.

## France / European Community

### Action against long-term unemployment

The Employment Delegation and the Interministerial Research and Experimentation Committee (*MIRE*) are holding a European symposium in Paris in 18 and 19 November 1991, entitled "Action against long-term unemployment: Research and Initiatives in France and Europe", to address this problem afflicting all of the European Community countries.

The symposium is being organised in close collaboration with the Commission of the European Communities and with the participation of the French Minister for Labour, Employment and Professional Training.

The event aims to compare points of view and the social and economic analyses in order to

understand the phenomenon in its entirety. Ten years of policies for fighting long-term unemployment have provided the wherewithal to assess public interventions in this field and consider the courses currently being followed.

This work calls for European participation in order to compare France's experience with that of other EC Member States. It will bring together public players, researchers, French and international specialists, and the "citizen's society" (companies, associations and training bodies).

The event will present research results and the practitioner's experiences and speculations to lead to further understanding of this social phenomenon and promote assessment solutions.

*Contact organisation: Athènes l'agence, tel.: +33 - 1 - 40 41 98 17.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Netherlands

#### Social policy one of the priorities of the EC presidency

During its presidency of the European Communities, the Netherlands will do its uttermost to draw up a directive concerning employees' involvement in important policy decisions of international enterprises and a number of directives in the field of working conditions. Another aim is to achieve recommendations about how the social security systems of the various countries could grow towards each other and finally about minimum benefits.

This appears in the memorandum "The Social Dimension and the Presidency", which the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment presented to Parliament.

## BASIC INFORMATION REPORTS

Comparable information on labour market operations and policies from the EC - Member States is published in Basic Information Reports. The following country reports are still available in English, French and / or German at the price of ECU 6 each, or ECU 50 for the set of 12.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Published in</b>	<b>Languages</b>
Belgium	1989	E / F
Denmark	1988	E / F
FR Germany	1988	E / F / G
Greece	1986	out of print
Spain	1988	E / F / G
France	1987	E / F
Ireland	1988	E / F
Italy	1988	E / F
Luxembourg	1986	out of print
Netherlands	1987	F / G
Portugal	1987	E / F / G
U.K.	1988	E / F

In December 1991 the updated Basic Information Reports of Luxembourg, Greece, Netherlands and Portugal will be published.



## Denmark

### Improved working conditions in construction work

Under powers conferred by the Danish Working Environment Act, the Ministry of Labour has issued an Order which partly consolidates the existing legislation concerning safety and health on building sites and at similar workplaces. It also lays down new regulations on provisions for workers at such workplaces.

The Order provides that workers shall have ac-

cess to sanitary facilities, a room where they can eat, washing facilities, etc. It is the first time that such provisions have been laid down by statute. Earlier, this matter was dealt with by collective agreement and the workers received financial compensation for the lack of such facilities.

In line with the Danish tradition, the new legislation was negotiated with the social partners who strongly support it as a measure which will ensure the workers safe and sound working conditions in line with the social and technical development.

## Netherlands

### Lukewarm reaction among employers to employment measures

Employers have shown little interest in measures such as wage-cost subsidies which should make it more attractive to employ people who have few job prospects. They feel that the measures are insufficiently in tune with the needs of individual companies, who want employees who are qualified and who are productive in the organisation. They demand the same of LTUs, of persons who have a low level of education or of those who are partially incapable of working.

These are the findings of a research study which is based on a literature review and on 26 interviews with employers and personnel officers. The research highlights the lack of knowledge of these available measures among employers and what is felt to be the inadequate matching of employment policy with the possibilities, needs and wishes of the individual companies. Although, virtually all of those who were interviewed expressed the need for suitable staff, they consider wage-cost subsidies to be of lesser importance.

The employers who were interviewed want more of a "tailor-made" approach, and placement which is more geared to demand. In order to achieve this, knowledge is needed of the workplace and of the general procedure at the company concerned. Experience shows that employment offices do not possess enough knowledge of these matters. Employers feel that the rules should be more flexible and reject compulsory measures. The training of employees should be stimulated and more pressure should be brought to bear on unemployed persons who do not want to work. Further, employers consider that more should be done to prevent unemployment. The State should adopt a more service-oriented and commercial outlook.

The research also looked at measures to combat unemployment abroad, where it was found that policies did not differ greatly from what is usual in the Netherlands. In other countries, the policy is also far-removed from the possibilities and needs of individual companies. Inasmuch as it is possible to verify the situation, it would appear that measures which force companies to employ persons who are difficult-to-place are never found to be satisfactory.

## United Kingdom

### "Action Special" Campaign

This summer, the Employment Department Broadcasting Unit and BBC Radio 1 completed the twelfth annual "Action Special", which is a campaign aimed at providing advice and accurate, up-to-date information on employment,

training, education and enterprise.

The five-day initiative featured broadcasts on Radio 1 focussing on a broad range of issues, including options at school, further and higher education, opportunities for those with special needs, the choices facing women returners,

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jobhunting, training, benefits and enterprise. The campaign received over eight hours of air time on BBC radio and television. This was supported by a free national telephone helpline based in Edinburgh, open for 12 hours on each day of the campaign, and an "Action Special" booklet, produced by the Employment Department, available free to all Radio 1 listeners. The helpline received 12,102 calls and over 355,000 "Action Special" booklets were requested.

In conjunction with this year's campaign, a conference of European broadcasters and employment/training officials was held in Edinburgh. The aim of this conference was to look forward to "Action Special Europe '92" and to seek ways of promoting information on living, working and studying abroad following the commencement of the single European market. Those who attended requested a second meeting in November 1991, which is currently being organised.

### **Rough currency conversion rates**

One European Currency Unit (ECU) was roughly equivalent to the following amounts of national currencies in August 1991:

Belgium	BFR	42.2
Denmark	DKR	7.93
Germany	DM	2.05
Greece	DRA	227
Spain	PTA	128
France	FF	6.97
Ireland	IRL	0.77
Italy	LIT	1,533
Luxembourg	LFR	42.2
Netherlands	HFL	2.31
Portugal	ESC	176
United Kingdom	UKL	0.70

# MISEP INFORMATION

InforMISEP is the quarterly newsletter of the Mutual Information System on Employment Policies (MISEP). MISEP was created to meet the need for an exchange of information on employment policies within the European Community. InforMISEP (iM) presents those measures, policies and actions adopted by the Member States which are aimed at promoting and improving employment within the European Community. It is compiled on the basis of information provided by national correspondents. The information serves to update the Basic Information Reports (BIRs). InforMISEP is published in English, French and German.

## Correspondents

<b>Belgium</b>	Joseph Remy Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
<b>Denmark</b>	Karen Thryssø Arbejdsministeriet
<b>Germany</b>	Felicitas von Weichs Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung Detlef Hein Bundesanstalt für Arbeit
<b>Greece</b>	Lily Apostolakis Ministry of Labour
<b>Spain</b>	Beatriz Quintana Solana Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social
<b>France</b>	Henri Roux Ministère de l'Emploi Cristina Marino Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi
<b>Ireland</b>	Fergus McCafferty Department of Labour
<b>Italy</b>	Teodosio Zeuli Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza Sociale
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Jean Hoffmann Administration de l'Emploi
<b>Netherlands</b>	Chris Smolders Arbeidsvoorzieningsorganisatie
<b>Portugal</b>	Victor Viegas Ministério do Emprego e da Segurança Social
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Jeanie Cruickshank Department of Employment
<b>European Commission</b>	Panayotis Sigonis DG V/B/1
<b>MISEP Secretariat</b>	Marjolein Peters Hans Weening Carole Leblond Aileen Stronge Martin Touwen

Institute for Policy Research  
P.O.Box 985  
2300 AZ Leiden  
Netherlands  
tel: (31) 71 / 25 37 37  
fax: (31) 71 / 25 37 02

